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September 18, 2020

The Honorable Terry Canales
House Committee on Transportation
Texas House of Representatives
Room 4S.4
Austin, Texas 78768

RE: House Transportation Committee Formal RFI – Interim Charge Item #3

Dear Chairman Canales,

Toyota Motor North America is writing in response to the Texas House Committee on Transportation's request for information on interim charge three related to autonomous vehicles. We applaud the committee for their continued engagement and focus on ensuring Texas remains a leading state for automated vehicle (AV) development and deployment.

Toyota Motor North America is headquartered in Plano, Texas and employs 7,200 Texans between our corporate office and the manufacturing facility in San Antonio. We are also proud to support over 14,600 jobs through our direct supplier and franchise dealer network in the state.

Toyota is deeply committed to the state of Texas and helping Texans, and all Americans, realize the societal and economic benefits of AVs. From providing increased mobility to people with disabilities to reducing traffic fatalities, AVs have the potential to be lifechanging and lifesaving.

The public policies Texas enacts significantly impact the ability of automakers, like Toyota, and automated driving systems (ADS) developers to deploy AVs on roadways in the state. The good news is that the current legislative environment in Texas is conducive to the safe deployment of AVs now and in the future. As such, Toyota supports the state's current AV law Tex. Trans. Code Sec. 545.451 et seq (2017) and strongly cautions against modifications that may create unnecessary barriers or hurdles for the safe testing and deployment of AVs.

Currently, Texas law provides a pathway to AV testing and deployment by fostering the advancement of AVs while providing appropriate guardrails to govern AV operation. Toyota feels confident in continuing to invest in innovation in the state because of this approach. Further expanding the statute could limit automakers' ability to deploy this potentially lifesaving technology given that a patchwork of state laws inhibits a manufacturer's ability to build and deploy any vehicle, including AVs.

As the committee seeks to optimize state policy for the safe deployment of AVs, infrastructure is an important consideration. What is helpful for human drivers is also helpful for AVs. Clear and consistent road striping, signage, traffic signals, lane lines and other roadway markings, work-zone areas, and traffic laws not only support the safe implementation of AVs but help humans drive safely as well. We urge policymakers to consider how to best support uniformity in these areas as consumers will likely be using a mixed fleet of vehicles for the foreseeable future that have various levels of autonomy.

Finally, stakeholder engagement is important for the safe deployment of AVs. The Texas Connected and Automated Vehicle Task Force, established by the governor in 2019, provides a designated body for stakeholders from across the transportation ecosystem, including automakers, to convene and help position Texas to fully realize the potential lifesaving benefits of AVs. Toyota encourages continued stakeholder engagement through the Task Force.

As always, Toyota hopes to continue to be a resource and provide our perspective on the necessary conditions for the safe deployment of AVs. For more information on Toyota's AV efforts, please see <https://automatedtoyota.com/>.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our comments and please do not hesitate to reach out with any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erik Kirkhorn". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and larger than the rest of the letters.

Erik Kirkhorn
Director Government Affairs
Toyota Motor North America